



**An Roinn Gnó,
Fiontar agus Nuálaíochta**
Department of Business,
Enterprise and Innovation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Press Office. Department of
Business Enterprise and Innovation

Phone: +353 1 631 2200

Email: press.office@dbei.gov.ie

Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) publishes 2018 Annual Report

Minister Pat Breen TD welcomes WRC success in recovering workers' unpaid wages

The Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) today published its fourth Annual Report. The report highlighted a significant increase in activity relative to previous years.

Mr. Pat Breen T.D., Minister for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market, and Data Protection welcomed the Annual Report by the WRC of its progress in terms of service delivery and output in 2018. *“Last year was a very successful year for the WRC. In terms of the Adjudication Service the number of hearings has increased by 20% over the period while there has also been a significant increase in the overall number of face-to-face mediations conducted in the year, more than doubling on the 2017 outturn. In addition, there was a 20% increase in the inspections concluded by the WRC in 2018.”*

Minister Breen also highlighted the success of the WRC in recovering over €3m in unpaid wages for employees over the year, an increase of 75% on 2017. *“As the economy continues to do well, we must ensure that those in work are paid what they are due and the WRC is playing a significant role in the pursuit of this objective.”*

The Minister added *“The Conciliation Service of the WRC, which deals with industrial relations disputes, held 1,145 conferences covering some 926,427 employees in 2018. It is*

heartening that although there were 4,050 days lost to industrial relations disputes in the period, this the lowest level since 2012.”

The Minister also paid tribute to the significant contribution of the former Director General of the WRC, Ms Oonagh Buckley, to the success of the WRC to date.

Mr. Paul Duffy, chairperson of the Board of the WRC commented *“Building on the WRC’s achievements, the Board submitted a strategy statement to the Minister to cover the period 2019-2022. Informed by core values of trust, independence, impartiality and innovation, the Statement set the WRC a fundamental target of establishing itself as a world leader in delivering an effective, efficient and trusted workplace relations service”*.

Mr. Liam Kelly, Director General (Designate) of the WRC said, *“The past year witnessed a significant increase in demand and output:*

- *telephone enquiries increased by 10%,*
- *conciliation referrals increased by 13%,*
- *individual complaints submitted for adjudication or inspection increased by 10%,*
- *inspections concluded increased by 20%,*
- *The number Adjudications heard increased by 20%,*
- *The number of Adjudication decisions increased by 32%, and*
- *The number of overall mediations increased by 220%.*

The hard work and commitment of the staff over the past year has been critical in managing the demand and delivering this level of output.”

Mr. Kelly thanked the Minister, the Board, and the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation for their support over the period.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITOR

Workplace Relations Commission

The Workplace Relations Commission was established on 1 October 2015.

The main functions of the WRC are to:

- Promote the improvement and maintenance of good workplace relations.
- Promote and encourage compliance with relevant employment, equality and equal status legislation.
- Provide guidance in relation to compliance with Codes of Practice.
- Conduct reviews of, and monitor developments in, workplace relations generally.
- Conduct or commission relevant research and provide advice, information and the findings of research to Joint Labour Committees and Joint Industrial Councils.
- Advise the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation on the application of, and compliance with, relevant legislation.
- Provide information to the public in relation to employment legislation. (other than the Employment Equality Act).

With a wide workforce of just under 200 staff, supplemented by over 30 external adjudicators, and with offices in Dublin, Carlow, Cork, Shannon and Sligo, and operational bases for hearings and meetings in many counties, the WRC's mission is to deliver high-quality service nationally, free of charge, which is

- speedy, user-friendly, independent, effective, impartial and cost-effective,
- provides variable means of dispute resolution, redress and effective enforcement, and
- improves workplace relations generally

Liam Kelly, Director General (Acting)

On 1 November 2018, the Minister assigned Liam Kelly, Chief Operations Officer, to act as Director General, pending the appointment of a new Director General. The recruitment process for this position is currently actively under way.

Read the full Annual Report 2018 at: [bitly LINK](#)

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS WRC ACTIVITY 2018



7,724

Adjudication complaint files received



15,451

Specific complaints received



5,312

Adjudication hearings



2,964

Adjudication decisions issued



Almost all adjudication complaints processed in less than **9 months**



Type of complaint

of the specific complaints received

27%

Related to Pay Issues



13%

Related to Working Time



14%

Related to Unfair Dismissal

14%

Related to Discrimination / Equality

9%

Related to Trade Disputes / IR Issues

8%

Related to Terms & Conditions of Employment

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS WRC ACTIVITY 2018



5,753

Inspections concluded



133,462

Employees covered by inspections



€3.1m

Wages recovered (up 75%)



1,145

Conciliation conferences held, covering over **900,000** employees



€2.7m

Web views (up 17%)

Legacy adjudication complaints reduced to

151



57,348

Calls to infoline



Face-to-Face

mediation up

206% on 2017



Quick facts from WRC Annual Report 2018

- There were 5,312 adjudication hearings held in 2018 amounting to on average 21 hearings per working day.
- Over 90% of complaints received by the Adjudication Service are processed within six months, where there are no requests for postponement.
- In 2018, just 4,050 days were lost to industrial relations disputes, the lowest level since 2012.
- The Conciliation Service, which deals with industrial relations disputes, held 1,145 conferences covering 926,427 employees.
- The Mediation Service more than doubled the number of mediations carried out compared with 2017.
- Overall compliance rates in terms of inspections concluded by the WRC averaged 44% but some sectors recorded over 60% breach rates (Electrical, Food and Drink, Hair and Beauty, Transport, Wholesale and Retail) while Fisheries and the Equine sector were higher again.
- The WRC conducted two focused inspection campaigns in the Equine and Fisheries sector last year.

ENDS